(b) With regard to the Yatrika projects at Dwarka, Srisailam, Rameshwaram, Omkarashwar and Ujjain, offers of land have been received and are being processed. The Samiti is trying for land for construction of a Yatrikas at Ajmer. No land is available at Kanyakumari at present for the proposl project of Yatrika.

Construction of Forest Lodges

1462. SHRI M. BASAVARAJU: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state the progress so far made with regard to the construction of Forest Lodges at Simlipal National Park, Orissa and for the Wild Ass in Sanctuary at Rann of Kutch?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI KHURSHEED ALAM KHAN): In March, 1984, the Central Department of Tourism sanctioned Rs. 36.76 lakhs for the construction of Forest Lodge at Similipal National Park, Orissa. A sum of Rs. 10 lakhs has been released as an advance to the State Government which is the executing agency for this project. It has been reported by the State Government that detailed drawings are being prepared for inviting tenders.

As regards construction of Kuba huts Complex at the Wild Ass Sanctuary, Enjal, Rann of Kutch, the expenditure sanction for an amount of Rs. 19.06 lakhs has been issued only on 30.7.1984. A sum of Rs. 6 lakhs has been released to the State Government, which is executing the project.

News item captioned "the equipped Customs Department"

1463. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news-item which appeared in the Indian Express dated the 9th July, 1984 captioned the "ill equipped Customs Department";

(b) whether Government propose to provide better quality equipment to detect smuggling and other anti-national activities; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY): (a) Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item in the daily "Indian Express" of 9th July, 1984 under the caption "The ill-equipped Customs Department".

(b) and (c) Considering the vast coastline of our country to be covered and the vulnerability of our coast to smuggling, the existing strength of boats with the Customs Department has not been found adequate to meet the requirements. However, steps have been taken/are being taken to augment the availability of indigenously built launches suitable for the use of the Customs Department. Orders have already been placed for the supply of 10 indigenously built Customs Patrol Launches. A number of confiscated plastic boats/out-board motors have been recently appropriated to Government and allocated to different Collectorates. A phased programme for the augmentation of the customs fleet with suitable vessels of indigenous make is being finalised by the Directorate of Preventive Operations in consultation with the Collectorates. The matter is kept under constent review for effecting suitable improvements/modernisation of the various anti-smuggling equipment of the Department. However, it will not be expedient to disclose the specific items of equipment used by the preventive and intelligence formations for anti-smuggling operations.

Direct recruitment and promotion of SC and ST

1464. SHRI RAM BHAGAT PASWAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of persons directly recruited and promoted by departmental promotion respectively in his Ministry during the last three years (for all categories);

(b) what is the number of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes staff recruited by direct recruitment method and promoted by his Ministry during the last three years;

(c) whether his Ministry have filled up backlog of vacancies reserved for Schedul-